GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1593
ANSWERED ON:01.08.2001
TRIPS AGREEMENT
GANGASANDRA SIDDAPPA BASAVARAJ

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether India is also one of the signatories of 46 developing countries which have tabled paper appealing the ministerial conference to ensure that their legitimate right to formulate their own public health policies is protected and that the Trips accord does not undermine it;

(b) if so, whether they have been demanding that those provisions of the Trips agreement which do not confirm with their demands should be modified;

(c) if so, the main decisions arrived at the WTO on this issue;

(d) whether India alongwith other countries also proposed this move; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA)

(a)to(e) The TRIPS Council of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in a special session on 20th June 2001 discussed the issue of Trade Related aspects of Intellectual Property Rights(TRIPS) and access to medicinesIn the special session, India along with other 46 developing countries submitted a joint paper on TRIPS and Public Health. India along with other co-sponsors has demanded in this joint paper that the WTO should ensure that the TRIPS Agreement does not undermine the right of WTO members to formulate their own public health policies and adopt measures for providing affordable access to medicines. Greater flexibility and clarity in the interpretation of the TRIPS Agreement has been sought in order to ensure affordable access to essential medicines and life saving drugs in keeping with the public health concerns of the developing countries.

In the special session it was decided that the issue of the TRIPS Agreement and access to medicines would be further discussed in the next meeting of the TRIPS Council in September 2001.